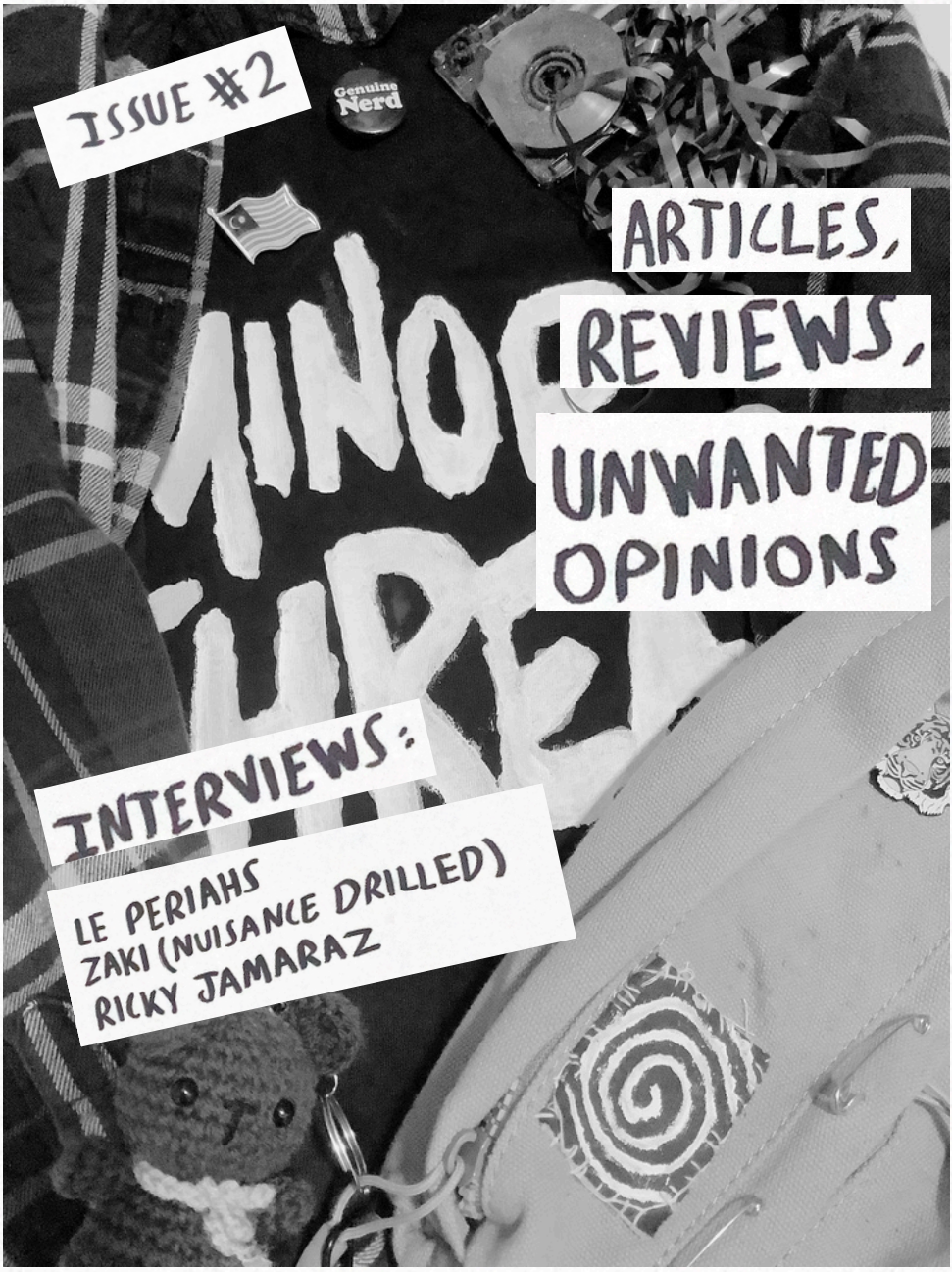
FLANNEL & BAND TEES



A FEW NOTES FROM THE EDITOR/WRITER

Flannel & Band Tees issue 2 huh? Well it's definitely been a while…

Now if you've been here since last year you might be wondering, what took so long? Now in case you forgot or were unaware but I had to sit through my SPM exams last year. Ten whole subjects in total and my last paper was on the 22nd of December. Everyone else had finished ages ago at this point and were probably already on holiday yet here I was on school grounds at 7:30AM for my economics paper. It wasn't fun but you know what else wasn't fun? Having to study while ideas about what I was gonna put in this second issue were running through my mind so after a couple of months slouching around in my room waiting for results to be out, I thought I'd finally start working on this whole thing.

Funny little story but I almost changed the name of this second issue, as in it would have been something entirely separate from Flannel & Band Tees though with the same spirit and of course still being written by me. The reason being the fact that I kept feeling like the first issue of F&BT was so lackluster in content and had so many flaws that I wanted to start on something entirely new which to be completely fair, was still gonna just feel like a sequel to F&BT anyway. The whole name is also a bit of a mouthful to say don't you think?

I had a couple names in mind. One was calling the zine A.S.T.H.M.A which stands for A Reason To Hide Myself Away but thinking now I wouldn't even know what that means other than the fact it sounds pretty cool. Then I thought about just calling the zine Asthmatic because well, I'm asthmatic…

But Asthmatic didn't sound too cool and I was also half afraid that that was already a thing even though I already tried my best to look up online if there actually was already a series of fanzines called Asthmatic. Another thing I was also not sure about was about what I'd make the logo of either A.S.T.H.M.A or Asthmatic to be (F&BT doesn't even have a proper logo so I don't really know what's my deal with this…) other than an inhaler. Then I started staring at this Nervhous Records contact card I had on my shelf which I received from a CD purchase a while back. The card had a logo of a dude using an inhaler on it. "Too similar…" I thought to myself.

Then all the while SPM was going on, my eczema started flaring up really badly– perhaps due to stress and I thought "hey! Eczema sounds like a cool zine name". I mean it'd come with a cool story too like if anyone ever asked about how I got the name but naturally I am an overthinker and I thought me naming my zine over a skin condition I have had the same vibe as the popular series of zines from back in the 90s called Denggi , the disease caused by mosquitoes. I mean typing it out now I'm aware that's actually kinda far off now that I think about it but you get what I mean.

Fast forward to the present and I've decided to just keep the name for a couple of reasons. One being the fact that a good portion of people are already familiar with the name "Flannel & Band Tees" so giving that name up entirely feels a bit sad in a way. Don't get me wrong, I'm still iffy about the fact plenty of people are gonna start reading the first issue as an introduction to F&BT but it's better than me trying to erase the fact I wrote it at all.

People grow and opinions change, like most people I'll also mature and regret some things I've written in the past but that can only happen with growth over time.

If I could change anything in issue one then I'd probably write way more than I did then (which I'm making up for in the issue you're reading right now). I'd also probably take more time on the whole thing by actually rereading my paragraphs and sentences because some grammatical errors I've made then still does slightly bother me today. Issue one to me felt more like a personal zine with some of the stuff I wrote. Looking back at it now, some stuff really felt like random emotional outbursts I had in the form of text but that was the whole point no? I guess this one's more closer to a "fanzine" if that makes sense and also closer to what I really want the F&BT to be like from now on. I can't guarantee you how long I'll be making these zines though, just thought I'd clarify that now.

Anywho, if you got any feedback or have anything to discuss about Flannel & Band Tees then you're more than welcome to reach out to me about it (as long as you're doing it in a civil manner that is because I will NOT tolerate rude people) though I can't guarantee you when I'll get back to you so without anymore stalling, I hope you all enjoy this second issue of Flannels & Band Tees…

-Statiscit/Emira

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LOCAL ZINE REVIEW: DUST ZINE ISSUE #I & #4

I remember going to SIBF back in 2024 I believe and picking up a copy of Dust Zine in a box filled with several other zines from Tokosue's booth. If I remember correctly the zines in there weren't actually for sale but rather something to be given for free with an actual book purchase but I managed to get it anyway. The issue I got at the time was the first one and last year I got myself issue #4 during KL Zine Etc. Both zines are rather short I will admit though quite compact with some decent band interviews. I find the little gimmick of asking each band some sort of question regarding nasi kandar to be a bit comedic but is also something that makes the zine memorable to me. As a book lover I'm also fond of a segment towards the end of the zine that recommends some rather underrated spots to purchase second hand books, places which I do believe deserve more attention because they're not very well known! Another thing I do have to respect about Dust Zine, though it's quite minor, is for staying true to the "cut and paste" style layout. Overall my only critique with Dust Zine is some minor use of generative AI text in issue #4 but besides that I don't have many complaints. I actually emailed the writer asking if he'd be alright with me mentioning his zine in my own zine and he happily replied so shoutout to him and here's to hoping we see more of Dust Zine again sometime in the future…

PUNK IS..?: POSEURS, PUNKS AND SELLOUTS

"Official Amazon merch"— the words stuck in my head like a piece of gum I couldn't scrap off. One of the most influential and popular punk bands of the 80s was releasing official merch on Amazon and announcing it on their social media account. It felt like some sort of silly joke but April Fools was ages away and there was no way that the page the link lead to wasn't real. I guess this wasn't anything new. The band hadn't really been the same since some of the original and key members of the band started leaving but really that could be applied to any old punk band nowadays. I mean with bands like these, usually all that's left is of what once was and the only people who actually go to their shows don't even enjoy it half of the time. If you have the bucks to spare then sure why not but at this point the band might as well just change their name and be a cover band instead. But why would they change their name? The whole point is that they're able to still use that popular name instead of going by a different one even if it meant that the current lineup of the actual band itself is already way different than the original.

Then a comment I read online lingered in my mind. The comment was saying that if you had the chance to play shows under the name of an already popular band then you'd probably do it too. At the end of the day people still need to eat, money is needed in everything we do in our daily lives. You can't just play basement shows all your life and expect to be able to make a living out of that alone so once these energetic teenagers moshing around get older, they'll get boring corporate jobs slaving away at their desk with a monitor in front of them while occasionally the others still perform and slowly watch the world around them shift and change. Don't get me wrong, maybe they'll still go to a couple local shows from time to time to catch up with old friends and reminisce the good times but usually there's nothing more than that. That's all it is sometimes I guess.

Punk is dead. Punk isn't dead. Which is which you tell me. It seems today that in the current digital age we live in (I sound like I'm writing an essay for an English exam haha) something like punk just isn't able to exist the same way it did a couple decades back. But that doesn't mean it doesn't exist at all. Somewhere out there in a heated cramped room, there's still kids with outrageous hair and patched up jackets jumping around to the intense noise of their local hardcore band, throwing around every single available object around them and hitting each other without a care in the world. In this room the harrowing things happening outside doesn't matter and with only a bit of change they're able to escape the world for just a little while. Somewhere out there in someone's bedroom or garage there's still kids jamming out to their hearts content just to record a small demo tape to pass around to some friends in the scene.

But with all these endless gigs and shows there's still the downsides of it with the occasional bonehead showing up once in a while and right wing idiots too stupid to realise what punk even stands for. Discrimation never dissapeared, it just died down a little and disguised itself to lurk in small crevices and corners. It's not until something actually happens visibly and you see the aftermath of it when people actually care. There'll be hypocrites and there'll be all sorts of awful people in the scene, not implying that we're supposed to just accept them but moreso that entirely eradicating them as whole just doesn't seem that likely— but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try.

It's kind of funny to me how in a time where the state of the world seems to be at its worst, a time where something like punk seems almost needed , some people are refusing to even acknowledge its existence but that's not to discredit those who actually have and continue to speak up regarding current matters, raising money for charities and those who need it. I just find it odd how bands who have been around for ages, once upon a time ago speaking out about this and that are suddenly silent now. This doesn't just apply to punk bands alone but any band for a matter of fact that has presented themselves as progressive and political (though I will say that all music is technically political in some way…) in any shape or form. Maybe it's the fear of backlash or saying the wrong thing regarding an issue they don't know much about— I mean with the existence of cancel culture nowadays people are very quick to critique others and hop on a bandwagon of being completely against someone. Regardless, I'm not sure if those are valid excuses. Research exists and there's no denying that the mass murder of innocent lives is wrong so how hard must it be to just pick a stance on something like such. Some like to argue that they don't have to speak up about certain matters since they've already made instances in the past where it seems clear what their political views are and besides, what kind of power do musicians hold besides influencing the mindsets of their fans? But silence is ignorance on the horrors of the current reality we live in and others are way more exhausted than we are…

RECORD STORE REVIEWS

Okay so here's the thing alright, I collect CDs and cassettes, not records so my opinion here is solely from the perspective of someone who collects those and not records. Another thing is the fact that most of these record stores are in fact in Amcorp Mall, not ALL but uh most of them are though I do plan to go to more record stores located around KL and such. I'm also not gonna include certain record stores I'm familiar with for a couple reasons like the fact they no longer exist, have already moved to a new store I haven't visited or I genuinely have never bought anything from them before. I'll add some of the more well know record stores as honourable mentions at the end just because I think most physical media collectors in Malaysia are at the very least familiar with them so without further ado here are some record stores I've been to...

1. Victoria Music Centre

Now this is like the first record store you'll see the moment you step into Amcorp Mall. If I remember correctly, the store used to be WAY bigger before but they moved to a smaller lot on the same floor, not far from where their previous store was (that spot is currently a clothing store I believe...). It's an okay record store if you're looking for very brand new imported stuff though because of this, the stuff they sell are quite expensive and I believe you're better off buying something second hand unless you're looking for an album that came out quite recently. Funny slightly unrelated story but I got warned by a staff of the store once because I was recording in there and didn't realise they had these big "no recording" posters up on the wall. Anyway they have some band tees as well. They also have some local bands (the mainstream and popular ones at least) so if that's your jam then they got some decent stuff. I managed to get an OAG compilation CD here for around RM20-RM30 so I'd say that's a win in my book.

2. Newleafz Records

Y'know I think you should all be grateful that I'm not some kinda evil gatekeeper because this is without a doubt one of my fav record stores for browsing CDs though I haven't been there in a hot minute as I'm writing this so hopefully my opinion hasn't change much by the time this zine is out. Located on the basement floor of Amcorp, way far back at the end of the mall is Newleafz Records. Admittedly it's quite a small record store, the kind of small where you could sort of block a whole passage way if you stick to browse an area for too long. The reason why I love Newleafz so much though is because they have so many good CDs if you're willing to browse the shelves for long enough. Then again I also think it's crucial for you to listen to a variety of stuff because if you're looking for something very specific then I can't guarantee you it'll be available but it's still worth a shot. Some popular but not super mainstream stuff can be priced at around RM20-RM25 which isn't the cheapest but in a world full of people selling some used CDs for RM50+ I think that's a pretty fair deal. They also have a fair collection of vinyls here. My only complaint though is that it can be quite humid in the store due to where it's located in Amcorp so be prepared to start sweating for your life down there...

3. Smol

A pretty wide range selection of records and CDS or whatnot for a smaller store and luckily this one is well air conditioned so you can be thankful for that. The CDs in particular are pretty organised as some of them are separated into different boxes according to genres so you don't have to go out of your way craning your neck to look at a shelf full of jewel cases. They have a lot of second hand CDs but also new imported stuff so if the other stores don't have what you want then you might wanna look here. I think Smol's pretty good for small local releases as well and they usually update this on their social media page so you can always see that if you wanna know if they have something you're looking for. The last time I went they actually give you a free sticker of the record store's logo with your purchase. I'm not sure if they still do that and if they do I don't really know if they only do that if you spend a certain amount or if it's generally for any purchase but I think it's a cute silly little thing to receive so a few bonus points for that haha...

4.Ear Bleed Records

Alright so this one is NOT located in Amcorp Mall for once (you're welcome), it's actually located at Pasar Besar TTDI, same place where Sputnik Records is, so if Sputnik isn't opened or crowded with people then you could fancy giving this one a visit though this store is VERY SMALL and that is not an exaggeration by any means. I'm talking way smaller than any of the record stores I've previously mentioned earlier or really just way smaller than the size of the average record store in KL/Selangor. There's really not much room to move around in and you could probably fit like two customers max at the same time. The selection of vinyls and other physical media is also pretty limited due to this BUT there's some nice stuff so it's not all bad. In a way, I feel like this store also partly a storage room for the owner's random music collectibles and pop culture related stuff that otherwise isn't really for sale as far as I'm aware. It is nice to have a browse and look around here anyway though. Try to strike up a conversation with the guy from the store if you're the talkative type maybe, I don't even know.

HONOUROBLE MENTIONS

- Teenage Head Records: I mean it's definitely one of the more popular ones out there that definitely has a long history for the time it's been around. I've been here like once so far and it actually took a while for me to reach because it's located at a pretty random shop lot area. I don't know if there's important lore behind this by any means since I'm not some mega local scene expert. A cool thing I will note about THR is the little music markets they sometimes do where basically they set up booths selling physical media in front of store. It's not much but I think it's neat. They also used to have people perform inside the actual store but I'm not sure if they do that anymore...

- Sputnik Records: This is another record store that I think is located at a weird place because like a wet market out of all places is not where I would expect to go to buy records but hey that kinda makes it a little special in a way. Once again, not enough room to walk around. One person stops to browse and it starts getting congested in there when there's way too many people inside at once. Sputnik also has this habit of making it as dim as possible in there. I guess the lighting is supposed to emit this chill kinda vibe with the tiny discoball they have and all but wow stepping out into the sunlight after being in there is not a very fun experience.

Just to clarify but these are all just my silly opinions. If you frequent record stores a lot then I highly doubt anything I said here matters anyway and if you are the staff member or the owner of any of these record stores then I hope nothing I've said here has offended you and if there are then I apologise for that. I still have plenty more record stores I wanna visit, not just around the KL/Selangor area but also other states and maybe some outside of Malaysia like those in other countries...

JUST DIY IT YOU PUNK!

DIY culture I believe has been an essential part of punk as well as any alternative subculture for a very long time. People would thrift used clothes, cut them up and sew them together to create something new. Today, DIY culture has become arguably less common. With easy access to online platforms, shopping a particular look has never been more easy and fast fashion has become even more rampant than ever before.

Now for the younger ones reading this, you might have considered doing some sort DIY before, you know just to add a little edge and style to your outfits or everyday items but you may be unsure on where to start which is exactly where I come in! Below are some DIYs I've done for the past year or so, they're not the best by any means but I tried and I hope this could encourage you all to pick up a thread and needle or cut out a stencil of some sort to paint some patches. Whatever it is, it's never too late to start now and most importantly have fun with it! Will it look bad? Maybe…probably…most likely… But we all start somewhere and you can only improve and progress if you start so happy DIY!

This was one of the earliest DIYs I did which were these poorly made custom patches I made from an old shirt I had. The shirt was already black in colour so i didn't need to worry about dyeing it or anything . I painted the "punk is not dead" one by hand which is why it looks so sloppy but i tried to use the excuse that it's supposed to look that way and the fact it looks so messy is "punk rock". is that a stupid excuse? i don't man you tell me! The centipede one is sort of stamped on in a way? I had these fake centipedes I got last year from my school's entrepreneur's day. They're meant for pranks technically but i utilised them as some sort of stamp by putting white paint on one of them and then uh, stamping the patch. Anywho I decided to sew the patches onto my school backpack as you can see here. Most people said nothing about it but I occasionally got rather nice comments from my juniors as well as some teachers so y'know what I think it's a win.

Now This one right here I'm aware isn't exactly the best. I was basically cleaning up my wardrobe one day when I found this old long sleeved black shirt that I haven't worn in ages so naturally what do you do? You cut off the sleeves and paint it of course! I've always wanted to work with stencils so one morning I spent time with myself stressing over my own printer which just wouldn't print this Minor Threat logo for some reason. I'm aware I could've just drawn the stencil on my own but I was already dead set on cutting out the real deal for my stencil. Eventually it worked out and I got the logo printed out but then came the actual painting part which I realised I messed up on especially since my stencil was just a thin piece of A4 paper. This made the paper stick on the shirt a bit and paint bled through it so the lines weren't clean when I took the stencil off. My advice? Please look up online on how to make proper stencils that you might be able to reuse in the future because if i didn't already make it obvious, I just waffle half of the stuff I make so the results aren't always pretty but I think that's just where the fun comes from…

The next thing I've customised is this old tie my dad gave me. I'm not entirely sure what vibe I wanted to go for, other than "whimsical" so this is what I came up with. Once again, I used stuff I sort of already had from previous DIYs like with the pins and ribbon. The patches are made from some socks if I remember correctly and I painted them over with white fabric paint (unlike the patches on my school backpack which were painted on with acrylic. Either way works but if you're working on something you want to wash then fabric paint is the way to go…). I'm aware it's not impressive and you might even think it looks rather silly but the best thing about it is the fact I customised it so if anyone asks or compliments it then I can proudly go on a whole tangent about it…

I think by far this is my favourite one yet and it also took the longest because I procrastinated on finishing it for so long but I'm so incredibly happy with how it looks. Basically my school gave me this cap like last year for doing some volunteer work for sports day and I saw it as a perfect base for some DIY. The earliest thing I did was add on that "Riot grrrl" patch since I already had that made ages ago. Then I had these chained rings which I rarely wear so I added them to the rim of the cap since I think it fits and looks real edgy and cool or whatever. Then I painted on those teeth by hand (though I sketched out everything first with a white colour pencil so I wouldn't mess up).

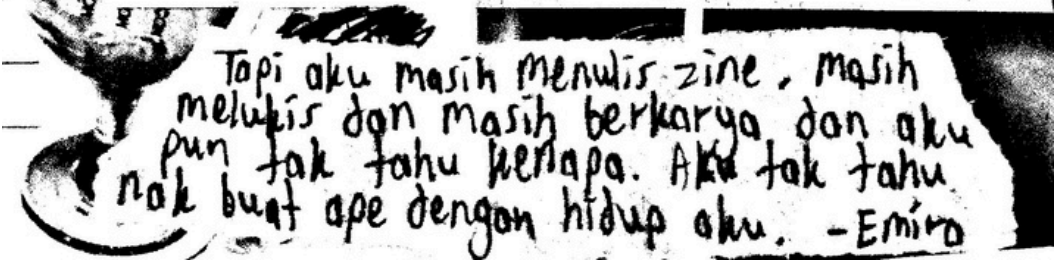
Everything else like the scrap patches, the weird embroidery and stuff is really just a result of me looking at what other people have done and taking inspiration from them to create something original for myself. I'd say just go for it honestly and don't overthink things like making something look "perfect" or whatever, I mean stuff like that is sort of made up in a way so have fun with DIY honestly and most importantly try not to care about what others have to say about it…

AKU BUDAK "ART"

Aku budak "art". Aku ambik aliran seni masa sekolah menengah sebab aku tak minat sains. Aku belajar subjek PSV tapi aku takde talent. Aku tak pandai melukis, mewarna atau mengecat guna ~~cat~~ akrilik dan watercolour.

Aku budak "art". Aku memang minat seni. Aku suka dengar muzik, aku suka tengok filem, aku suka membaca dan menulis macam puisi yang panjang-dan merapu macam ni. Aku suka melukis, mewarna dan mengecat. Aku suka menjahit.

Aku budak "art". Orang cakap kat aku yang seni ni tak boleh berkembang dekat Malaysia. Orang berseni mungkin takde kerja dan kalau ade pun, gaji takdelah tinggi mana pun.



Tapi aku masih menulis zine, masih melukis dan masih berkarya dan aku pun tak tahu kenapa. Aku tak tahu nak buat ape dengan hidup aku. -Emira

Aku Bukan Loser

AMCORP MALLRATS!

“CD semua kat dalam ni RM40 eh bang?”
“Ha’ah”
“Habistu yang CD Bittersweet ni RM40 ke RM80?
“Kalau yang tu RM80 la”
“…”
Lebih kurang macam itulah perbualan aku dengan seorang mamat yang menjual CD dekat Amcorp Mall. RM80 untuk sekeping CD? Memang tak berbaloi. Kalau aku selam beli CD dekat record store basement floor mungkin aku boleh beli 4 keping CD berlainan dengan harga yang sama. Dua dekad yang lalu harga CD Bittersweet itu mungkin tak mencecah RM20 pun tapi sebab rare punya pasal harga pun meningkat.

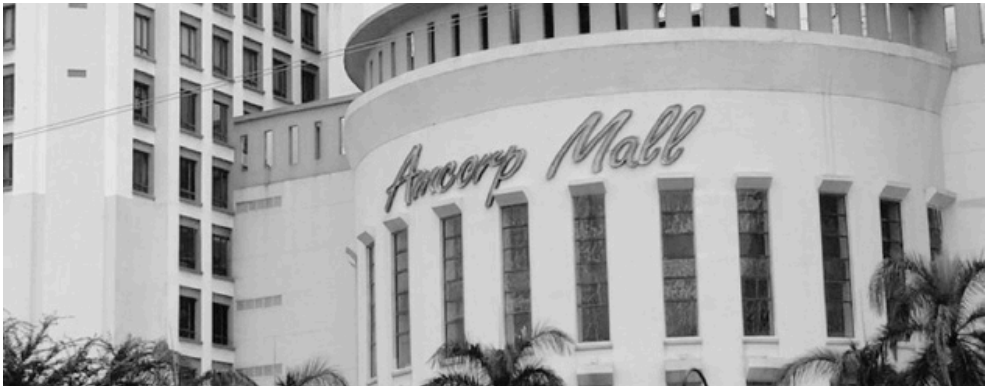
Hari ini hari Sabtu (atau mungkin Ahad, lantaklah, what difference does it make…) dan seperti setiap hujung minggu di Amcorp, fleamarket akan diadakan. Di sini lah kau akan nampak pelbagai jenis umat berlainan personaliti dan berbeza background seperti pakcik yang menjual wang Malaysia lama, acik menjual pinggan mangkuk kaca periuk belanga vintage, metalhead yang dah pencen menjual piring hitam dan media fizikal yang lain serta auntie atau uncle menjual buku yang dah kuning dan koyak muka suratnya. Bagi orang lain mungkin tempat ini tidak memberi apa-apa makna kepada mereka tetapi bagi aku Amcorp Mall ini adalah antara tempat yang terpaling freaking awesome di negara Malaysia (pada pendapat aku…)

Aku mula datang Amcorp masa sekolah rendah, actually maybe even masa aku baru masuk tadika (tapi kalau tanya ayah aku dia cakap dari zaman aku baru lahir lagi dia dah bawa aku datang ke sini). The reasoning is sebab ayah aku yang minat barang-barang antik serta menjadi collector untuk keris dan sebagainya. Aku yang tak tahu apa-apa sekadar ikut sahaja masa itu, melihat pelbagai jenis barang yang berhabuk dan tidak lagi relevan. During this time period, hanya satu benda je yang aku akan look forward to bila datang Amcorp iaitu membeli buku dekat kedai Bookxcess (which by the way is still around until today) pada tingkat atas sekali mall serta makan tengah hari dekat kedai nasi padang Selero Nogori yang malangnya sekarang dah lama dah tutup. Hanya memori dan kenangan yang kekal dalam kepala aku tentang restoran itu (serta mungkin beberapa gambar dalam storage phone mama dan ayah…).

Masuk sekolah menengah, aku mula berminat dengan media fizikal seperti kaset dan kemudiannya lebih kepada CD sebab lagi senang untuk aku cari album lagu yang aku minat dalam bentuk CD berbanding kaset. Disebabkan minat aku ini, aku lagi kerap nak datang Amcorp untuk mencari benda yang tak berfaedah dan membazirkan wang tunai ayah aku. Kalau aku tak datang beli barang, aku suka datang semata-mata nak rasa yang diri aku ini cool dengan memakai baju Hardrock Cafe bersama lengan inner baju putih, studded belt di pinggang dan gelang "punk" yang mak aku tak berapa minat sangat untuk aku pakai. Kononnya aku inilah yang terpaling cool di sini, that is until aku nampak budak sebaya dengan aku yang nampak lebih cool. Itu satu lagi benda, aku suka tengok orang cool. Okay that sounds off, bak kata omputih aku suka "observe cool people". Alright that still sounds weird tapi kau faham-faham je la maksud aku.

Mencari kelibat orang yang aku rasa "cool" dekat Amcorp ini bukanlah benda yang uncommon aku suka buat dan ternyata tidak uncommon juga untuk actually nampak kelibat mereka. Kalau bukan dekat gig, Central Market, area Bukit Bintang, Kinokuniya KLCC, thrift shop, cafe hipster atau record store di sekitar kawasan KL dan Selangor, orang yang aku rasa cool akan datang ke Amcorp. The unfortunate reality is that aktiviti aku observe orang-orang cool ini memang takde hasil pun. Aku memang nak approach orang, sembang dan buat kawan tetapi sebagai budak yang jenis pendiam dari zaman sekolah rendah lagi dan cepat anxious bila jumpa orang yang aku rasa lebih cool daripada aku, aku akan mula rasa gelabah sehingga tak sempat pun nak tegur sesiapa. This is with the exception orang yang approach aku dulu tapi itu pun ikut situasi. Jadi dengan setiap trip aku datang ke Amcorp, aku akan ada rasa regret at the end of the day bila aku dah nak balik sebab tak tegur orang cool yang aku nampak pada haritu. With that being said, lately aku dah cuba buat effort sedikit untuk menjadi orang yang lebih "social" la nak kata though I'd say to still take that statement very lightly. Cuba kira berapa banyak kali aku sebut perkataan "cool" dalam perenggan ni.

Aku faham yang Amcorp Mall ini bukan lah tempat paling niche di Petaling Jaya ataupun really dalam Selangor in general. For the past few years, lagi ramai mula minat untuk mengunjung ke Amcorp Mall yang bukan sahaja tergolong dalam kalangan warga tempatan tetapi pelancong mat salleh juga dah mula sibuk untuk datang melawat bagi mendapatkan barang yang rare dan takde di negara diorang, mungkin juga barang-barang tersebut lebih murah apabila convert mata wang negara kita kepada mata wang negara mereka. Terbukti juga yang tempat ini pun dah banyak berubah dan diubahsuai sini sana. Mungkin perkara ini memang bertujuan untuk menarik lebih ramai orang datang which is not wrong dan aku takdela kisah sangat (sort of). Aku juga bukan nak claim yang Amcorp Mall ini port untuk aku dan aku only sebab aku bukanlah gatekeeper atau the only person dekat muka bumi ini yang suka membeli CD dan barang tak berkaitan yang lain tetapi kalau ada mana-mana kawan aku tanya mana port aku then ada chance yang tinggi aku akan jawab Amcorp Mall. Entahlah…



INTERVIEWS
Fender STRATOCASTER
Gibson

GRRRLS TO THE FRONT! : AN INTERVIEW WITH LE PERIAHS

I remember the first time I heard about Le Periahs was from my mom. She found out about them through social media and told me how all the members in the band looked like they had the "same vibe as me", whatever that means… and at the time I was quite new to the local scene. I had just discovered all these cool bands and the idea of an all-girls one caught my attention because you don't hear about them all that much. I mean the local music scene is pretty male-dominated you have to admit so to see these young girls start a band, get on stage and start performing genuinely means a lot. I was even more surprised upon finding out that most of the members are around my age, some even younger! And all throughout 2025 I kept thinking about interviewing the band sometime if I ever made a second volume of this zine and welp, here it is folks and I hope you enjoy.

Emira: Thanks Le Periahs for accepting be part of this second issue of Flannel & Band Tees! It's nice to have you guys here. Now to start off, how exactly did Le Periahs start? Like what's the band's backstory? It'd also be great if you guys could briefly introduce yourselves if you'd like.

Airra: Thanks so much for having us Flannel and Band Tees! We are so honoured to be part of something so heartfelt ^_^
Le Periahs was always a dream idea of mine (Airra) a teen all-girl hard rock band.
Honestly I thought it would just stay that way forever because for most of my early teens (I4-I5), I was playing in smaller, mostly male bands. They were really kind and I learned a lot from them, but it never fully felt like me. I just joined because I knew I needed to go somewhere.
When I was I6/I7 (2024), I was already in a band with my schoolmate Nabiha (bassist/vocalist), and we used to have a lot of movie nights with another friend, Mia.
One night I showed them The Runaways (20II), which is the film that really sparked my whole passion for music, and they got inspired too. Since Mia was always over, I started teaching her drums and she was really dedicated. That's kind of how the band began forming, but we still needed a bassist at the time.
Through some miracle connections, Nabiha found Myra (misfItslvr), who was managed by TC. Everything moved really fast after that. We all started putting in a lot of work and for the first time it felt like we were actually getting somewhere. Myra suggested some synonyms for "misfit" like "lepers" and "pariah", and I combined them as a small nod to Le Tigre. That's how Le Periahs came about ^0^
I'm really happy with how this band's grown, and I'm so thankful for everyone who's been in it. Especially Tiara and Jo, my bebehs, it really just feels like a family.

Jo: Haii I'm Jo, I5 years old soon, I live in Shah Alam & the drummer for Le Periahs. I'm also the newest member (joined last year around august).

Nabiha: I started with the guitar in 2023 but I wasn't too fond of it bcs it was difficult so I picked up the bass, it's so fun I grew an attachment immediately #ilovemybass

Yena: Hii !! My name is Yena, and I'm the lead singer of Le Periahs !! I joined after I met Airra and Mia in a bar, whilst I was singing for another band. I stopped them after their performance to tell them that I loved their set, and that I think that they're super cool. I guess they thought I was cool too, cus they asked me to join their band afterwards heheheh

Emira: Now as we all know it, the local music scene has always been quite male dominated, even until today so it's always cool to see new all girl bands being formed. With that being said, many are always quick to bash whenever women involve themselves in the scene. What do you think is the sole reasoning for this and what is the best way to overcome it?

Airra: The patriarchy has been so detrimental in the way it discourages girls from a young age.
Labeling things as "guy things" or "girl things" creates barriers that shouldn't exist.
Because of that, girls in male-dominated spaces often have to be better than the average dude just to be taken seriously, and are constantly expected to prove themselves.
Being an all-girl band means we get attention for that alone, but also pressure if we mess up, because it can reflect on women in the space as a whole.

I've been lucky to never grow up thinking this was something I wasn't allowed to do, but I know not everyone has that. To those girls, I know it's unfair. It's hard to ignore ignorant comments/actions just because we wanna do what we love. That's why we keep pushing against it. Little by little, things change the more we talk about it and the more we express what we want to. So please start creating your art, and hopefully the world keeps moving in a better direction.

Jo: What I do to overcome this is I ignore and speak up whenever I have to to those men or people in general that gives stupid comments especially as a drummer because I genuinely believe people that tend to say these type of stuff are just really insecure with themselves and they're egoistic or jealous that a girl can do something better than what is seen as a "male thing" to do. This is exactly one of the main reasons why I have a really strong passion for drumming because I love humbling people and showing that girls and women can do anything if not better in male dominated areas. I also love inspiring girls out there making them believe that they can do the exact same thing as I can and follow their hearts no matter what the public says.

Nabiha: Most of the time, the remarks I get when it comes to playing bass/rock music is that im a poser, I don't know how to play, and being called "ganas" for playing rock like men. But to be honest I've developed a carefree mindset over time and these things have never really affected me. I think I can say that I'm very secure in what I do and what I like.
People are gonna keep talking nonetheless, whether what they say about me is right or wrong, or the image they have of me reflects who I really am or not, I just don't really bother and keep close with the people who believed in me

Yena: Misogyny !!! Frick the patriarchy !! It's an outdated mindset, quit gatekeeping!!
Given how male-dominated rock music is, people can be quick to underestimate or criticize women who step into the scene. "Belajar masak je la", "syok sendiri", "wanita kan berjaya beat kaum lelaki dlm music." are all some real comments we actually received before on our videos, from both men and women !!
People tend to not take us seriously as musicians, judging us more on image rather than the music itself.
Honestly, misogyny is so deep-rooted that it's going to take a while to overcome it and unlearn it as a whole. But the scene doesn't belong to only men. The most important thing to do is continuing to show up, regardless of all the stereotypes. It's hard in the beginning, but I believe that over time, genuine passion and love for the music will triumph over any criticism. We keep doing it because we love it, and that's enough for us. The more representation there is, the more normalised it becomes to see women play music, and that's what we hope to do !! Women CAN play rock music :p ^^

Emira: Around last year you guys had the privilege to perform on television on the channel TVI for the show Selamat Pagi Malaysia. How did this happen and what was the overall experience like, especially for a band that's still so new to the scene? Did it feel nerve racking in any way? Did it feel awkward and out of place? I'm curious to hear all that went on behind the scenes on that day haha

Airra: For the TV station, I initially wanted to turn it down when I first heard of the offer. The band was going through a little something and I felt we weren't ready for an opportunity like this. I felt like there were a lot of other local bands that deserved a spot like that. It was a lot of pressure seeing as we were kind of new and didn't have much to offer yet. It was a really commercialised scene as well so I didn't know if that was the way I wanted Le Periahs to go.

I sat with the thought and realised this is one of the few times a Malaysian network really recognised a small and very feminist oriented group. This was such a big opportunity for the other girls in the band as well so why not use this platform to bring awareness to a bigger picture. I was really grateful the whole time, even if it felt a bit outta place and awkward. Haha we couldn't have our piercings on or dress how we normally would on Malaysian TV, like you have to be super covered. Me and Tiara kept messing up our words because we weren't used to formal Malay, Yena was worried about accidentally cussing or saying something political because it was all LIVE. Oh ya! Our bassist couldn't come on it so we got another blooming and talented musician on short notice. Shoutout @milkchug23!

Yena: Of course it was nerve-racking !! But we were more giddy and excited than scared. We had to wake up really early, so we had a sleepover at Airra's beforehand. It was my first time on TV, and it was totally different from playing a regular gig.
To me, the interview was actually way scarier than the performance. I'm used to singing, even if the setting is different, I can just pretend and use all my usual tricks to get over the stage fright. But I'm definitely not used to being asked questions on live TV. Luckily we were all there together, so I could just look at Tiara, Airra or anyone else whenever I felt nervous. I think if I were answering those questions alone, I would've freaked out a little bit. I don't think they know just how grateful I am to have them by my side, always.
I don't think it was my best performance, but I did try to give it my all regardless. I had fun, and it was an awesome experience I got to go through with my best friends ^^ <3

Emira: From my understanding you guys have actually written a couple of original songs and recently performed them during a final gig from a while back though I don't believe these songs have ever been properly recorded or released anywhere online. What are the current future plans for the band and do you guys plan on releasing any music officially?

Airra: We do have a recorded demo that we're planning to release on platforms like YouTube Music and SoundCloud, but I've definitely been a bit of a perfectionist about it. I've been trying to figure out the right way and the right people to release with. A lot of the girls are really focused on their academics and personal lives, which I fully support because they're all doing so well. I've been working on an EP I really want to try out soon though.
Stay tuned :]

Emira: This question is mainly for Yena though the rest of the band can give their input as well. Yena, from my understanding you currently take law in college and you've talked about the fact that girls, specifically girls in bands, should get legally educated on such matters to avoid getting taken advantage of and the alike. What do you think is the best course of action for this since I believe many are still at a lost on where to start?

Yena: Yes !! I'm currently a first year law student studying at UM !!
Getting legally educated isn't so much the priority, it's more so a stepping stone to learning how to speak up. I encourage it, because I believe that knowing your rights gives you the confidence to uphold those rights. It's important for everybody, but especially for women. Not only because women are more prone to being taken advantage of, but also because they are discouraged from speaking up when they are.

Society expects women to stay docile and quiet; don't be "too demanding", "too loud." We see it happening in real time, to real artists (like the smear campaign against Chappell Roan). But don't let that scare you !! It's not what's right in the eyes of a biased society that matters, it's what's right in the eyes of the law. Law is fact, and no societal opinion can override fact. That's why legal knowledge comes in handy heh.

As for where to start... it seems complicated but look past all the fancy legal jargon and at its core, you'll find that the law is simple. You don't have to be a lawyer to know right from wrong. Any reasonable person with a capacity to think knows; If someone breaks a promise, that's wrong. Abusing artists, refusing to pay for services, unfair treatment, cheating, lying, it's all wrong. You already know it, and it's enough. Knowing the law just helps make your argument stronger.

And for those who want to go beyond basic morality and really get to know the law, unfortunately, it's not very accessible unless you're in law school. Legal textbooks are bulky, overcomplicated and expensive, and it's not impossible, but it's difficult to find a starting point. I wish it was easier, and I wish I had a definite answer to that question, because I truly believe that everyone has the right to learn. Law is for the people, but unfortunately, it isn't so accessible to the people when it should be. That's why I try to do my part by sharing the knowledge I have :3. I have a TikTok account, @ilenrys, where I post about law and studies, simplifying complicated legal concepts into something more easily digestible. It's a dream of mine for education to be accessible to all. Get educated !! Know your rights !! Speak up !!

Emira: Alright one last question. I for one truly believe that there's so many talented young girls out there who are willing to perform and start bands but due certain fears and reasonings, many don't end up doing so. As an all-girl band, what would be your advice to all these other young girls out there?

Airra: Ever since I've been in this band, I've learned that we can only really show up for ourselves. There will be people who get you, and people who don't, and that's okay.

Don't compare yourself to anyone but you. There's honestly no better feeling than looking back at yourself 2-4 years ago and realising you actually did things you never thought you could, even if they're small. Baby steps y'know.

I used to be such a different person, and I think that proved to me that you can become someone you're proud of. And the more you find yourself, the more you find people like you too, and you end up building something with them along the way.
So if you're scared to start something like this, just start anyway. You don't need to have it figured out first.

Nabiha: The only advice that I have for the young girls out there is, do it scared. On my first ever Le Periahs gig (as the former singer) I was not confident with my voice at all and I even forgot some lyrics, but nobody noticed my mistake, nobody thought my voice sounded awful, and everybody cheered for how good I did. Stage fright went away for me because I found my confidence and I truly just enjoy playing music in front of a crowd. I don't get scared anymore because performing is something that I love doing, even if I didn't have much practice because it's genuinely just fun for me being on stage.

Yena: Same advice as Airra and Nabiha !! Don't wait until the time is right, if you want to do it then go for it. You'll thank yourself for it later. I enjoy listening to music just as much as the next person does, but it was when I started singing on stage that I really started to appreciate the artistry in it.

When you take a song and make it your own, you get to keep a version that belongs to you and only you. When you perform it for others, you're sharing a piece of your soul with an audience. You put your soul on display for all to see and criticise. It's vulnerable, it's intimate, and so so scary but so incredibly worth it. There will most likely be hate and backlash, people will tear you down and it sucks. But don't let it deter you from doing what you love. There's no such thing as bad art, and any song that you sing is your own.
It's yours, even if you don't want it, and it's valuable, even if you can't see it. Nobody can take that away from you.

So my advice, put yourself out there and perform with your heart, because there's no better feeling than the one you get when someone hears you and feels everything you're trying to convey. I'm not the most technical singer. There are some riffs that Nabiha can do better than me heh ;p but I like to think that I sing with my soul, and that's something I pride myself on. :3 I'm glad I started, because music added so much value to my life. It brought me joy, opportunity, comfort, love, friendship and so much more. Pick up that instrument, even if you can only play 4 chords. Start that band. There's so much waiting out there for you to discover ^^

Emira: Thank you so much to Le Periahs for participating in this interview and I wish these girls all the best in their future endeavours. Hopefully we'll see more women start bands and participate in the scene. You can follow updates on the band on their Instagram page (@leperiahs) and here's to hoping that they have much more installed for us in the future…

Photo taken by a friend of the band (@myracrl)

INTERVIEW WITH ZACHVANALLEY OF NUISANCE DRILLED

Emira: Brader Zaki, thanks for accepting to be a part of this interview for this second volume of Flannel & Band Tees! It means a lot. So you've been in the scene for a very long time, as early as the 90s from what you've told me and I'm wondering how did you get involved with the whole thing in the first place? Was it due to friends and peers? Zines? Something captivating about the kind of music that was dominating the youth at the time? It'd be interesting to hear all about it and to compare how different things were then compared to today's scene.

Zaki: Hi, thank you for your interest in interviewing me! I'm glad you reached out to me at this point in my life, thus I can share a little bit of my opinions and story for the readers out there. Honestly, it was a long journey to get to the beginning of my involvement. To be frank, it was when I first heard "Scum" by Napalm Death in I990. It gave me an idea of how a [structured] explosive noise could be so amazing when crafted with a sensible songwriting style. And to be honest, I had never heard any grindcore album before "Scum". Jeffrey Walker too, who created the incredible cover artwork is spot on with the subject and has shown his expertise with great craftsmanship. The lyrical content and its subject? It's otherworldly magnificent for me at that time.

Of course, this interest was shared with friends who were also interested in the same thing. So other bands like Slayer, Sodom, Destruction, Kreator, Sepultura, Paradise Lost, Amorphis, Youth of Today, Crass, Discharge, Doom, Conflict, Extreme Noise Terror, Amebix, Cock Sparrer, Darkthrone, Mayhem, Minor Threat, Stompin' Ground, Repulsion, Neurosis, Terrorizer, Inside Out, Death, Mortuary Drape, Obituary, Warsore, Godflesh, Morbid Angel, Meatjack, Thergothon, Winter, Burning Witch, Spazz, As-Sahar, Pitch Shifter, Green Day, Iron Monkey, Fudge Tunnel, Tiamat, even the local bands like Modar, Suffercation, Silent Death, The Bollocks, ACAB, Old Automatic Garbage, Nebiras, FTG, Carburetor Dung, Rator, Necrofist, Sil-Khannaz, The Pilgrims, Naked Butterfly, Infectious Maggots, Social Infection, Cromok, Brain Dead, Catarrh, Marlinspike and many others; just to name a few, were our craze at that time between I990 and 2000. Certainly, all of these are the bands I have been listening to up until now along with other similar bands from 200I onwards; it has never stopped.

Visual art (especially of the cover artworks), writing/literature and rock/metal/uncommon music is always my interest since the beginning, in fact my first encounter with Search's "Cinta Buatan Malaysia" in I985 and Black Sabbath's "Paranoid" in I987 (also some other rock/metal bands such as Iron Maiden, Lefthanded, Metallica, Guns N' Roses, Megadeth, Rusty Blade, Wings, Sweet Charity, Scorpions etc in the 80s) has opened the gate to more extreme encounters afterwards; so, it'd be easier for me to feed myself with the vibe and its connotations.

In the 90s, most of us listened to various genres including death metal, black metal, punk rock, hardcore, grindcore, industrial, experimental/noise, doom metal and other extreme genres. There was no discrimination at all in listening to any type of music we liked, rather than just being immersed with the popular and safer music styles, so-called 'acceptable for the masses' that were endlessly promoted by the mainstream media (TV, radio, newspapers and magazines) at the time.

These 'sacred' materials and stuffs are basically shared (and bought/sold) during gigs/shows or our unofficial and impromptu meet ups at school or at our meeting spots ie: your parents' house, music stores/rehearsal studios or during galah panjang/konda kondi, sorok-sorok/mengaji Al-Quran/football/badminton/takraw/skateboarding at our regular evening sessions. We mostly traded stuff like demo tapes, zines or original tapes (bought from the local stores, gigs/shows and from abroad) either by hand or snail mails. So, everything came manually where the digital age hadn't yet made its way into the perspective.

I believe I found out about Nuisance Drilled only about a year ago when I purchased the EP Azab Enapcemar from Caveat Zine's booth during KL Zine Etc 2025. What I didn't realise was that the man taking care of the booth was the vocalist of the band! And I only made this silly realisation at home when I finally unwrapped the digipack CD wrapped in plastic and lo and behold there was a photo of the man himself with the rest of the band inside the CD.

Finding out more about the guy and I realised he's been in the scene way long before I was even born, having contributed not just in terms of music but zines as well and several other cool stuff I wish I could do if I was even half as cool as him hahaha…

So one day I decided to reach out to him to see if he'd be down for an interview and wouldn't you know he said yes. When asked what I should address him as, he just insisted me to just call him "brader" or just his name, Zaki, which is kinda funny looking back at how formal I was when I reached out to him about the whole thing hahaha…

Anyway I hope you all enjoy reading this interview segment of the zine!

The music itself at that time was quite expressive and very honest in terms of 'underground' aesthetic and its comprehension. Some even considered it as a raw outcome, but the sincerity conveyed was mostly reasonable and sensible: Art that had something to say, not just to please the audience. I may sound too glorified of the era here because it was a growing up phase for me, sorry if I act like one, but one must live it to experience it, then one will know what I am saying here. However, I believe every era has its own characteristics, flaws, pros and cons, let us just celebrate it as it is.

Emira: I've read on your DeviantArt profile that you were at some point a co-organiser and a big contributer for Kuala Lumpur Zine Festival from a while back. A lot the kids my age don't really write zines as much anymore. Do you think zines are becoming obsolete as of lately? Are they relevant at all in a world where digital media has become so widespread?

Zaki: I am either a co-organizer or a regular participant of Kuala Lumpur Zine Festival and [hopefully] will always be since 2006. I've started involving myself with KLZF since the early beginning when it was called "Independent/Alternative Publishing & DIY Zine Mini Festival", held during an Artport event at Shah Alam Art Gallery on March IIth, 2006 until the last one where they have deliberately changed the name to "Kuala Lumpur Zine Etc" (due to a certain reason and purpose) at Kuala Lumpur & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (KLSCAH) on August Ist to 3rd, 2025.
To answer the question: No. Zines aren't obsolete. They're just no longer the primary medium.

Honestly, I have received the same question in an interview dated back in 2003, where during that time the popularity of zine culture had slowed down due to the existence of the early social networking media or digital platforms such as Friendster, Myspace, Blogspot and many others. Also, a year before Facebook was launched in 2004. So, to be fair to the zine culture, it's been around for at least 23 years (that is over 2 decades) since I was first asked this question and yet it's still around until today amidst the digital phenomenon that is made available.

Furthermore, the first recorded zine was in I930 by the Science Correspondence Club in the US, "The Comet". If that wasn't enough, what about the first punk zine simply named "Punk" in January I976 from the US and followed by "Sniffin' Glue" in July from the UK in the same year? So, it's been almost a century for the science fiction zine and half a century for both punk zines. Isn't that an enormous [and on-going] lifespan by far?

Back to the question, the answer is still no, zines are not obsolete. At least for now, zines have steadily rejected from extinction. They refused to cease and just shifted from necessity to intentional resistance. But why do zines seem obsolete? It is because digital media always has instant distribution (via Instagram, Bandcamp, Facebook etc), zero printing cost, faster global reach and algorithmic amplification. Compared to that, zines are slower, costly to print, physically limited and labor intensive. If the goal is fast access, digital wins every time.

But that's not the original point of zines. What zines actually do, that digital can't? Zines were never just information carriers. They were basically gatekeeping filters against commercialization, physical proof of participation, anti-algorithm cultural artifacts and scene documentation outside corporate platforms. When you hold a xeroxed, stapled, cut-and-paste zine (some may have been printed nicely with offset printing treatment), you're holding intent, labour, limitation and a time frame of a specific underground moment/experience. A PDF or Facebook status updates cannot fully replicate that. Especially in the DIY underground scene itself where the materiality matters.

Some artworks created by Mr Zaki himself, sourced from his DeviantArt account:

Digital media also isn't neutral in terms of algorithms where it essentially prioritizes the frequency/regularity, engagement bait, visual conformity (lack of creativity) and somehow punishes slow thought, where the updates/news come one after the other without pause, which causes a traffic chaos of vast information. Whereby zines allow density, long winded essays, horrible layouts (which lets the maker of its own creativity and errors), discomfort/upfront (of opinions) and offer longevity of its physical existence.

Example: It's normal to write a critique about bands/scene in a zine, but on Instagram it would be another story.

Ultimately, when everything is instantly visible, the rare thing becomes valuable. That's why vinyl survived streaming, cassette culture revived and risograph printing is booming again. Zines now function like analog vinyl in a Spotify world and a rehearsal tape in a YouTube age. Not mass. But culturally potent.

In our scene context, zines historically preserved early scene histories that never made it online, documented obscured or underrated bands/zines/labels/distros/projects/shows/events like mine (haha) before digital platforms cared, also created a distribution network regionally and internationally (between cities and between countries). Without physical zines, plenty of 1970s to early 2000s DIY underground documentation would have vanished years ago.

In contrast, digital archives are fragile where accounts are deleted, platforms may die and links somehow break down over time. A stapled zine in someone's drawer survives 25 years or more and it allows a duplication (photocopy or printing) repeatedly.

The major question is: Are they still relevant? Yes, but it works differently as zines are now more of curatorial objects, cultural artifacts, intentional slow media, anti-corporate statements and scene credibility markers. Zines are no longer about mass communication. They are about integrity signals.

And if our goal is fame, fast exposure and monetization, the answer is always digital. But if the goal is merely documentation, ideological clarity, community filtration, historical permanence and subcultural depth, then zines still win. The issue isn't whether zines are obsolete. The real question is: Do you want speed or do you want weight? My verdict is zines carry weight, meanwhile digital carries speed. The strongest underground movements often use both but treat print as the archive and digital as the [loud] announcement.

So, after such an 'analysis' and hopefully easy to understand; we can conclude that: the Internet enables faster and easier communication, while physical formats provide safer and more exclusive documentation. The physical product of a zine normally determines its acceptance. Therefore, quality control is a must. Target audience is necessary. Zines are basically focused on a niche market, they are for a specific group of people, not made for the masses. Correct quantity production is important to set the amount to be released based on the expected number of buyers to avoid over-resources. Since zines are often self-funded, matching the print run to the expected buyer count is the only way to stay sustainable.

Somehow, the actual questions could be: Are Malaysian zines evolving or stagnating? Has DIY aesthetics been commodified? Is the current underground too dependent on digital validation? These questions certainly require more space and time to be discussed and examined.

By the way it's okay, nevermind. No matter what people say, if you want to do it, just do it. Well done to you and those who still believe and are passionate in continuing this struggle.

Emira: I noticed that you've also done quite a handful of illustrations for bands like Dum Dum Tak, occasions like zine fests and even for Caveat Zine which you're the editor of. This isn't to mention that you were previously a design lecturer. Where did this love for art stem from and do you think that the jobs of creatives in Malaysia today are being threatened with the rise of generative AI and such?

Zaki: I started drawing as far as I remember when I was a year old as my father was and still is my inspiration to this day. He is the one who taught me how to draw since the early beginning.

Originally, I came from Felda Sening, a very remote area of the southern side of Peninsular Malaysia, Johor; a place where many talented 'artists' were born and lived. It's located in Pengerang; somewhere in between Desaru Beach Resort & Sungai Rengit (where Petronas RAPID Project is currently situated). The talented artists that influenced me in the early beginning are basically self-taught in nature. They are Abang Yunus, Abang Man, Abang Hanif and of course, my father among others; I owe them in terms of motivation and knowledge. God bless them all!

Then, I lived in Selangor since 1996 when I enrolled in a local public university for an art course. After finishing my study in 2001, I started to work and stayed in Klang Valley from then up until now. I was a figure drawing and design lecturer at the local private university from 2007 to 2015.

This art thought/process over the years since 1979 until now is what has made me today and the love for artsy stuff hasn't stopped ever since.

AI here is supposed to help human life for the betterment and we humans are the ones who should control its use/purpose. To quote my own statement back in 2000, where I wrote in my old zine, 'A Dream?': "We should be the ones controlling technology, not the technology controlling us like it is currently." It's now been proven and somehow it seems there is no turning back for us all.

AI is basically a digital data compilation or collection or analysis of shared information online. Summarized for desired conclusions and basically a problem-solving task without taking deeper thinking using the human brain manually.

Whether the rise of AI is a threat to creative jobs or not, it depends on how much our life depends on AI itself, of which it's not only affecting Malaysia, but it's a worldwide phenomenon. Human touch is still sacred and important. AI could somehow provide a very cosmetically attractive outcome of an 'artwork', but flaws of human creation are why it's called an 'artwork' instead of AI is a 'data-work'. Hence the difference between the core words of 'creative' and 'generative': Create and generate. Human organic touch is basically a creation that is manually created. Meanwhile AI is automatically generated, based on the data collected from the internet sources uploaded by humans themselves. It's just a circulation of which came from humans given the knowledge voluntarily into the digital-sphere namely the internet itself.

The question is, what if one day there will be no internet at all? Then, manual production will be the vital part of human survival and progression all over again. Yet, those lives relying solely on the AI will be chaotic and clueless. Or if one day there will be no single human submitted any data to the virtual world at least for a day, a week, a month or perhaps within a year? So, the data accumulated within the system itself will be repeatedly processed and extensively used until there will be no more 'creativity' to be generated, and the outcome will be merely repetitive and stale, therefore irrelevant to the current standard.

Ultimately, AI itself is a human creation. Therefore, it has its flaws. Bear in mind, AI is just another tool. Control and minimize its operation in our daily life. Use it only when necessary. Utilize our brain more and don't depend too much on AI for any decision making. My advice, enjoy AI while you still can, there will be a time when it all shuts down and humans will always be humans, as we always have been. Please be prepared for that.

Emira: You're also the vocalist of the band Nuisance Drilled which has been around for quite a while now. Is the band currently working on anything new?

Zaki: Yes, I've been the vocalist of Nuisance Drilled since the early beginning in 2000. After more than a decade of hibernation (or a silent progress), we have finally released our second EP, "Azab Enapcemar" on July 15th, 2024 and the first official single, "Nyaman" last year on September 5th, 2025. This year we are working on our first full-length, perhaps it will be released at the end of this year or next year, it depends on our pace and development. Check us out for more info at: https://nuisancedrilled.bandcamp.com or https://www.instagram.com/nuisance drilled. Thank you.

Emira: Alright one final question. I think it's evident that the current local alternative music scene has changed quite a lot compared to how it was a couple decades back, I mean most things change anyway but if there's one thing that should stay constant is the fact that the scene has always been against discrimination like racism and the alike, yet it still happens today anyway! What would your biggest advice be to all the young folks out there reading this who are currently part of the alternative scene?

Zaki: Good question. I always think that this scene was created to always promote a safe space for all, especially for those who want to create, collaborate and share goals for a better future than before. Where the right to speak and express oneself should be celebrated and even supported, [as long as] it does not interfere with the rights of others. Thinking critically for the good of all parties. Sharing ideas for the benefit of fellow human beings regardless of background in bridging the gap of differences and eliminating feelings of blind prejudice.

My [biggest] advice is to keep on creating and do not let obstacles as an excuse not to do something meaningful in life. Make the most of your youth. Every success certainly starts with small but persistent and consistent steps. Always be strong and don't be shy about getting help if you encounter difficulties in life. Remember, we are not alone in this struggle. Keep moving forward and instil the determination that we will succeed in the future. We are undoubtedly valuable, at least for ourselves and for those around us.

Okay, thank you for the space and opportunity given to appear in 'Flannel & Band Tees' zine. Good luck with all your endeavours. Keep on fighting! See you around. Cheers!

IN CONVERSATION WITH: RICKY JAMARAZ

Taking a slight break from the cool people in our local scene but I'd like to introduce a really cool dude all the way from Nottingham and his name is Ricky Jamaraz! I've been familiar with Jamaraz's work from a couple years back when his song Microwave started gaining traction on Tiktok which was then released in 2023. This was then followed by an album titled "Worst Album Ever" though that is obviously far from being true. I rediscovered him again quite recently around last year when internet algorithms introduced me to an artist by the name of "Sammy Phase" who is supposedly from the 90s. In reality though this was actually one of the first and earliest fictional characters made as an installment for what is soon to be the Jamaraz Musis Universe (JMU for short), a series of characters and bands that exists in a fictional universe created by Jamaraz. So here we are today to ask him more about his thought process behind his music and a couple of other things. It was a pleasure to have him part of this zine and I hope you all enjoy this interview as much as I do!

Emira: It's a pleasure to have you be part of my silly little zine here Ricky Jamaraz! What's it like being on the other side of the world? And what have you been working on lately as you're answering this?

RJ: Thank you, it's a pleasure to be featured! It's not too bad over here, Spring is gradually arriving, and the flowers are starting to come out which is nice. It's becoming less grey. As of answering this, I've been working on tons of stuff. My main focus right now is writing the debut album for a fictional band I created called Sweat Glass Halo. I'm not sure what it's about, but a lot of the songs are very… angsty, for lack of a better word. I'm actually almost finished writing it, and I'll be recording it all in April. I've just been bouncing back and forth between writing songs on my bass and recording super raw, lo-fi demos, just to build up my familiarity with the songs and build up the band's lore. I'm very excited to get stuck into the recording sessions!

Emira: You've been pretty busy with the Jamaraz Music Universe especially with all these different characters and bands you've created like Sweat Glass Halo, King Hertzie and very recently Glinter to name a few and admittedly I'm quite impressed with how varied and distinctly different they all are (I guess that's technically the point lol), you've evidently grown and evolved quite a lot with your music which is amazing to see! But does it ever annoy you that many still just remember you as the quirky teen who made "Microwave" a couple years back?

RJ: Yes and no. Like the moon, I go through regular phases of hating that song and then being grateful for everything it's brought me, but I feel like recently, for the first time ever, I actually don't think about it much at all. I feel like a complete separate person to who I was back then so it's not really logical to judge myself now against who I was then. I still get regular comments from people saying they just discovered my music through 'Microwave' and then they immediately go and check out whatever I'm doing right now, so really how could I be annoyed at free promotion! It was a weird era for me, and I'll never go back, but I'll always try and see the good parts.

Emira: On your own personal website you've mentioned the term "Jamarazcore", how exactly would you describe this to someone who is completely unfamiliar with your work? Define "Jamarazcore", I mean what IS "Jamarazcore"?

RJ: Honestly, I've got no clue, and I'm not even sure if I like the word, I'm not sure why I included it on my website! I guess it's just a handy catch-all term for the feeling my music carries. Because even though I write all these dozens of songs, and release them under many different pseudonyms and characters, realistically they're all coming from me and my head, so there's always going to be some sort of common ground with these songs whether I like it or not.

I think part of being "Jamarazcore" is being obsessed with stories, and by extension, the human experience. The Jamaraz Music Universe isn't a music project, it's a narrative and a story, packaged up in music, just because that's what I'm good at and what I enjoy the most. Even before I came up with the concept of the JMU, many of my songs revolved around stories and the human experience. Worst Album Ever has a (rough) narrative, Dec. I3th I998 is explicitly a story/concept album, even some of my earliest songs like 'Jimmy's Song' and 'Gary and Lauren' outline different fictional characters. So I really think to be Jamarazcore is to be obsessed with stories, real or imaginary.

Emira: Concept albums aren't something new and neither are fictional bands but creating an entire fictional universe in the form of music is something quite ambitious especially when you're the main person behind it all. How do you manage your work ethic as a musician, especially one that has so many different characters and personas? Does it ever get draining?

RJ: Never! God, no. Most things in life drain me, but making music is one of those few things that make me feel alive, it's everything I breathe! I can definitely see why someone might think keeping track of all these different personas might be daunting, but it's just one of those things that makes sense in my head, and it helps me literally sort out all the ideas I get every day. It's like if you've ever had one of those friends, you go round to their house and their bedroom is a tip, but they still manage to find everything they need, because the mess makes sense to them. The draining job is trying to package my ideas in a way that makes sense to the outside world!

In terms of managing my work ethic, I'm naturally very dedicated and focused. Well, I am when it comes to things I enjoy. Ask some of my teachers at college and they'll tell you I'm lazy and don't put enough effort in, but that's only because I prioritise my music career as it's what I'm actually going to pursue once I leave…

It may not seem like it due to my large creative output, but I am a very analytical person at heart. I could go on and on about the systems I've created for myself in my life that allow me to be so creative, but I won't bore you. I just realised quite early on that if I want to do this for the rest of my life, I've got to put in the work. Sometimes if I'm with my friends and I open my calendar app, they look at it and are just in shock at how packed and multicoloured it is. I feel like I come across to some as this weird, eccentric artist who lives fluidly and walks in the direction of the wind, but really, a lot of my life is calculated, and I like it that way. I wouldn't be who I am without my calendar app.

Emira: Where did your interest in making music originally stem from? And what exactly is your end goal with the music you currently make?

RJ: I'm not really sure how music came into my life, but it just happened one day. The concept of making music was a discovery for me, and as soon as I discovered it, it was like a musical switch inside me flipped on, and off I went. I've always had some sort of creative output, it's always been an important part of my life. I used to draw lots as a kid, I would fill notebooks with drawings of monsters and comics and dinosaurs and houses. I definitely remember actively thinking as a kid that I was expressing my thoughts, turning them into something real, and I think that's exactly the same approach I have to music. I ultimately use stories and music to express my thoughts, because if I didn't, I would just blow up and splatter everywhere.

And as for an end goal, I have none. I have no idea how long I'm going to live, but I can only hope I keep creating until the very last day.

Emira: Alright final question because I feel like I've asked way too much haha, and I know you get this one quite a bit and have probably answered it before but what would be your biggest advice for all the young musicians out there who have either started or plan on starting their own music career?

RJ: My biggest advice is stop asking for advice and just start. You don't need all the answers to start, you just need to take a leap of faith and dive into it. Any advice I could give to readers of this would be vague and meaningless, and I think people should just start, and learn the lessons along the way. All the lessons I've learned may not apply to you, and my life is completely different to yours, so don't model yourself after me, it's lazy. My only slither of advice is to just be proud of who you are, where you've been and where you're going. The rest figure itself out, but ONLY if you keep moving.

And that's the end of our interview with Ricky Jamaraz. As I'm currently writing this, Jamaraz has recently released an album titled "Nowhere Like Always" under the fictional band Glinter for another character part of the Jamaraz Music Universe named Pete Wicker so please do check that out but besides that here I am signing off for this interview.

You can find out more about Ricky Jamaraz and his music on his website www.rickyjamaraz.com as well as other social media platforms such as Instagram and Tiktok…

INI SCENE KAMI

Conflict that happens in the scene is never completely avoidable I think we can all agree on that. At some point there's always going to be small disagreements here and there, people arguing on something so miniscule that it's almost comedic but things can get real concerning once harrassment is involved or even worse, violence.

A while back some stuff happened with a few small bands in KL, most of which consisted of kids barely even in their early 20s. This combined with immature behaviour from the gig management and a couple bands involved resulted in some sort of fiasco involving ticket sales, venue fees and whatnot. In short, money was the problem. Either way I didn't have any direct relation to it but once it's out there you might as well find out what's the deal right? It's hard to say who was fully at fault but luckily the whole thing got resolved in the end but what got me thinking was less about the actual conflict.

It was how some people reacted to it. Cyberbullying and hateful comments galore with some indirect mocking thrown in made the whole thing a bigger deal than it was supposed to be. Now I'm not gonna pretend and act all holier than thou or something. I've acted petty. I've gossiped about stupid stuff I'm not even a part of but I draw the line at people acting like children over something that could've easily been solved in a proper manner. Conversing and discussing is not the hardest thing in the world but what do people do instead? People go out of their way to joke about it instead, making slightly vague and indirect statements about others, all the while their peers from other bands back them up.

How are we supposed to protect the scene when we constantly shun others away the moment they don't fit certain standards we've made up? All people do is fight without a rational cause. I guess there's a certain satisfaction that comes with conflict, bashing others and putting them down for your own validation as well as the one that comes from others. When people make mistakes you should critique it maturely, not wish on their downfall. What happens comes back to people anyway, karma or whatever you wanna call it.

I understand, some people have more privilege and access to things than others but that shouldn't be a measurement for how talented someone is. I think the funny part is when people who come from similar backgrounds complain about the same thing they have and y'know what fine, do what you want I guess but don't pretend you're some kind of saint. I can be a real hypocrite sometimes but at least I'm somewhat aware of that.

The problem to me purely stems from kids not being able to accept people that they deem to be outside of their usual clique and this problem can go as far back as how they were or currently are in school. Day by day we're making the scene seem like a place that doesn't welcome people who don't fit in a certain box or checklist even though at the end of the day we're all here for the same reason and it's for the love of music so what is there to fight about with that.

Now don't take this the wrong way and make what I say seem like a loophole of some sort so let me be more specific here, the scene does NOT welcome people who discriminate so racists, ableists and the alike can screw off.

Now back to our earlier topic but this discrimination also includes discrimination towards bands. So they're still new to the scene, maybe they sing or play instruments a certain way that's different from how you'd do it. So what? Maybe it's just not for you then so carry on and move along instead. It's that simple. Nobody's forcing you to like a certain band or a certain music artist.

I'm not saying it's negativity all day everyday in the local music scene, in fact I would say that most of the time things really aren't that bad but I also think it's crucial to have these kind of conversations just so we're all on the same page. Everyone has good and bad experiences, it differs for each person anyway.

The local scene is a community and as a collective of people like such we should always strive towards uplifting others, not put them down by making stupid story posts on your social media account and saying terribly mean things. The awful world out there is already trying to tear us apart, they like conflict because it separates us from working together but I say screw that. Start bands, throw gigs, go to shows, write zines, buy CDs, DIY your clothes and do everything you can because every single contribution, regardless if it's small or big, counts and matters, no matter what you think…

MEMBACA DAN
MENULIS BUDAYA
KITA
TERUSKANLAH
BERKARYA
PUNK IS
NOT DEAD

THE SLOW DEATH OF STREAMING & RISE OF PHYSICAL MEDIA

In the previous issue, I had talked about physical media, mainly expressing my love and appreciation for it. Then last year (2025), one of the biggest music streaming platforms out there, Spotify, started having a decrease in both users and artists/bands on the platform for a couple different reasons. Spotify's CEO investing in AI military was one of them that I could recall. This was then also accompanied by the ongoing issue of the platform not paying artists fairly. I wouldn't go into detail with the whole thing because I'm sure a handful of you lot are probably bored out of your minds hearing about it constantly, though in the small case that you are completely out of the loop with this whole thing then I highly suggest looking it up online. This zine isn't some up-to-date newspaper and I'm not gonna bother informing you about something that's been a hot topic since last year, maybe longer.

Anyway back to the topic at hand but this whole situation gained even more attention when some fairly well known and pretty well established bands started taking their music off the platform entirely. Bandcamp, while I wouldn't say is a complete replacement of Spotify, started becoming an alternative platform for fans to give direct support to their favourite bands and music artists in the form of purchasing music downloads as well as CD, vinyls, cassettes as well as other merchandise. From here you could sort of say that physical media in itself is already gaining even more popularity than before with people trying to find other solutions to have an easily accessible music library.

Here's the thing though, you could only acquire so much with physical media. A common argument I hear a lot is that buying physical media is more expensive compared to streaming which if we're being technical here, isn't technically false. Take CDs for example, one could cost you around RM20 or so. I rarely ever see CDs priced for RM15 and below unless it's a cheap compilation CD with songs nobody cares about so if you do get something good under that price range then I'd consider you to be quite lucky. Imported CDs as well as CDs from local bands that are "rare" or are no longer being pressed can cost about RM50+ which, I don't know about you but I just don't think that's worth it unless your someone trying to complete a collection for a certain band then yeah sure maybe you're willing to pay the price but in terms of actually utilising these CDs, it would be absolutely mad if you are willing to pay that much for each album. And we're only talking about CDs here. I rarely ever see anything good on cassettes if I'm being completely honest. Vinyls, despite being more in favour and in demand right now, can be quite costly and aren't exactly suitable for portable access.

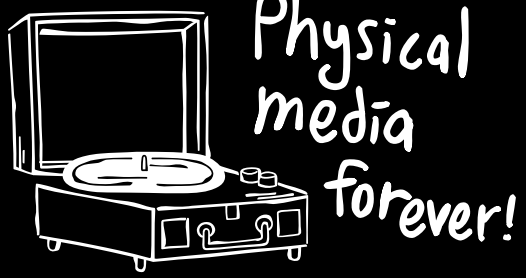
So now what are we left with? MP3 players are a thing but even then the storage for these things can be quite limited and finding decent second hand working ones aren't easy especially when you're competing with a hundred other y2k wannabe hipsters who are looking for the same thing. I'm not saying it's impossible exactly but you have to get ready to save up some money. With everything I've mentioned earlier, you might start getting the impression that this whole thing is inconvenient so why bother with it right? Well convenience comes at a cost and that cost just so happens to be inconvenience. Now that might sound confusing so let me elaborate more on what I'm talking about.

People like to see all these efforts in a short term sort of perspective like the amount of money you have to spend but collections are built up slowly over time so no one's forcing you to buy every album you like all at once though part of today's consumer culture has made it seem that way. Now see the bigger picture here, from a long term aspect you're building up a music library that no one (especially not big awful companies) can take away from you because you actually own the music you listen to which is something a subscription on a streaming platform can't give you.

I will admit that this is still flawed in many ways. Collecting physical media for one can't keep you updated on each latest release, especially ones from smaller bands/artists so you'll still have to depend on listening to music digitally somehow for this. And yes physical media can cost you money that not everyone has, you're lucky if you find anything decent for cheap but a subscription will always seem more attractive to suffice for your musical needs. I'd just like to preface this but in no way am I entirely against streaming, what I'm against is artists not being paid the money they deserve and I'm even more strongly against evil companies enabling harmful propaganda in the form of advertisements on their music platforms. Alternative platforms do exist but very few are decent and many are still in a phase that requires lots of development, especially ones that are managed by small teams.

Now back to physical media but I believe there's more to it than just having a rack of jewel cases. I for one would like to propose this idea to anyone reading this right now and mind you this is only a suggestion. It's also not something new either so the older folks reading this can hold their horses from saying stuff like "oh we already did this long before you guys were even born!". Anyway, if you buy a CD or any physical media, bring it over to a friend's house. Listen to it together, maybe bring and invite a few other people along. Got an album you no longer want? Try asking online if anyone wants to trade it with another. Exchange music, discover new bands, meet people, make friends, do listening parties and hangouts, start clubs even.

There's so much more to physical media than being an outdated medium to those who don't care but if we're so stuck up with the mindset we currently have then nothing will change. I know it may seem overwhelming to start now but things like this will matter so much one day, believe me. So go out there to your local record store and treat yourself to something.



[redacted] RECORDZ
VINYLS · CDS · CASSETTES · DVDS
OPEN
BLACK [redacted] FLAG
Yeah sorry we don't sell any "Tame Impala" vinyls here.
MINOR THREAT
DESCENDANTS
Emira 17.9.2025

SOME SMALL THOUGHTS ON THE PERCEPTION OF ALTERNATIVE PEOPLE IN MALAYSIA

Look I think plenty of us already know by now that alternative subcultures in general aren't exactly viewed very well by the public, especially those who are completely unfamiliar with it. You could say that's kind of the whole point, to be part of something that stands out from societal norms. Unfortunately this comes at the expense of people constantly making misconceptions about you, way before they even get the chance to get to know you. Maybe it's the way you dress, the music they think you listen to, the makeup you wear, etc. Whatever it is, there'll always be some people staring the moment you're out in public. It's not always negative of course. Sometimes people stare because they genuinely think you're cool but lack the confidence to tell you so (I would know since I have the tendency to do that quite often haha).

Last year a case happened that gained the attention of the local goth community here in Malaysia. I'm not gonna tell you the whole timeline of events since I was more of an observer from outside of the community but what I understood from the whole thing is that a promotional video was made for some sort of event in KL (the kind with local brands and thrifting or whatnot) and was then posted on the official social media account for this event. In the video there was someone talking about the booths at the event, one booth in particular was run by a lovely goth who was selling handmade jewellery. What sparked rage however was when the "interviewer" (or whatever you wanna call the person) made a statement on how that booth in particular seemed demonic/satanic which is a rather false statement made by someone who doesn't know a single thing about the goth subculture as a whole. This isn't to say I'm super educated on the matter either, I'm still learning something new from my fellow alternative peers everyday but I do know better than to just pull nonsense out of my mouth and say something like that, especially if it can give a certain community (that you're not even a part of) a bad rep.

The whole thing of course got me thinking for a while about alternative people in Malaysia. I'll be honest when I say that for the longest time I didn't even think they existed because growing up I rarely ever saw people dressing up and freely expressing themselves in such a way through fashion. Alternative fashion in particular is seen as rather strange to some people and like I said earlier, maybe even viewed as "demonic" to some folks. People like to judge things that seem abnormal, I think there's no denying that but it gets too far the moment you start making harsh comments just over someone's appearance even though you don't know a single thing about them or what they're like. No offense but I don't think it's that hard to just mind your own business. Nobody's hurting you, nobody's asking you to dress the way they do so why even bother? What baffles me even more is when these comments are made by grown adults talking about people, who for the most part are literally just young folks trying to express themselves. Why limit the creativity of the youth? Why bully young people at all for doing something that doesn't negatively affect others? We all like to talk about how we're all "anti-bullying" and such but are you aware that this also applies to situations outside of schools and educational institution?

Shaming alternative people isn't always obvious either. Sometimes it's disguised in the form of public street interviews, asking people why they dress or look the way they do. While there's people who do this out of genuine curiosity and to educate others, some just do it to make you the laughing stock of people for views and online engagement. Often the comments can be even worse. Hundreds of adults behind screens making statements about how a teenager they've never met is somehow depressed or has parental issues at home just because of how they look. You don't know these people, you don't know anything about them so why even comment? Do we not think before we say anything anymore? Now keep in mind, this is only about those who are unfamiliar with these subcultures but what if I told you that those who are supposedly "a part of them" can be just as mean? "OGs" of a subculture bashing young people and saying how they're "doing it wrong", constantly trying to claim the fact that they were here before any of these kids were born. It's upsetting. You would think they that they would be happy to see that kids today aren't so different from how they were growing up but instead they just couldn't stop pushing the narrative that things are "ruined" now somehow. What could've easily been an opportunity to give guidance and share their piece of experience is quickly turned into a competition between who's better. At this point I can only hope that things get better from now on but nothing is really guaranteed honestly…

I'm not sure who needs to hear this but listening to all grrrl bands doesn't automatically make you some sort of feminist!

You can talk about them & listen to their music all you want but it won't erase the fact you still make misogynistic statements and act weird towards women.

Give support to the women in our scene but don't take it as an opportunity to bring down others. Uplift one another & please please please educate yourself on feminism before pretending you know about the whole matter.

ZINE FEST REPORT

Now right now you might be asking, Emira, why are you writing about an event that happened a whole year ago? Because I can! And I think documentation is important so even though there are posts about this event online, I'd still like to talk about my experience especially considering this is the first ever zine fest I have ever attended.

So here I was heading to KL with my dad on the 3rd of August 2025. KL Zine Etc 2025 went on for about 3 whole days, from the 1st to the 3rd of August so I basically attended on the last day. I knew about the event from Tokosue considering Kak Sue was one of the main organisers (correct me if I'm wrong). The event was held at the Kuala Lumpur & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall though they actually didn't really take up the main space of the actual hall but rather the second floor where it was more like a spacious passage way connecting a couple of different rooms for different activities and the such.

When I was there, there were a decent amount of people around though nothing too overwhelming. You had to register and pay a RM10 fee to get in but in return you receive a RM5 voucher which you can use to support any of the vendors.

I had my fair share of looking around, which to be fair there wasn't exactly too much to see but that's not necessarily a bad thing. In one of the largest halls on that floor there was this Gantung Zine Exhibition which displayed a bunch of different zines hand crafted and made by passionate people and submitted as part of a competition if I remember correctly. I actually almost contributed a zine of my own for the thing but due to my usual lack of inspiration and motivation, I unfortunately didn't. I still enjoyed looking at all the zines being displayed there though. They all came in different shapes and sizes with unique designs for each one so all in all there was a lot of effort that had been put into this whole thing.

In that same large room they also had this open mic thing going on where people were allowed to come up front and perform or whatever. Mr Zaki (which I've interviewed in this zine) actually played some music with a friend of his for the open mic at some point, not on the day I attended though unfortunately.

Besides the open mic thing, they also had a zine workshop! I think a couple people might've participated, either way I think it's a nice activity regardless.

Now the main thing for the event is of course all of the vendors selling zines as well as a couple of other stuff like art prints, books and the alike. I visited quite a few booths during the event actually. One of them was for Mythologie Resources where I got myself a copy of the book Be Kind, Rewind by Farah Liyana. The author was actually one of the people at the booth so I got her to sign it! Some other vendors I got stuff from was Caveat Zine, Filsufi and of course Tokosue.

Moving on from the vendors but they also had this conference room where talks on different topics were being held. Since I was there at the event briefly I didn't actually get the chance to attend any of them although I did briefly watch one that was being livestreamed on one of the days I didn't attend the event.

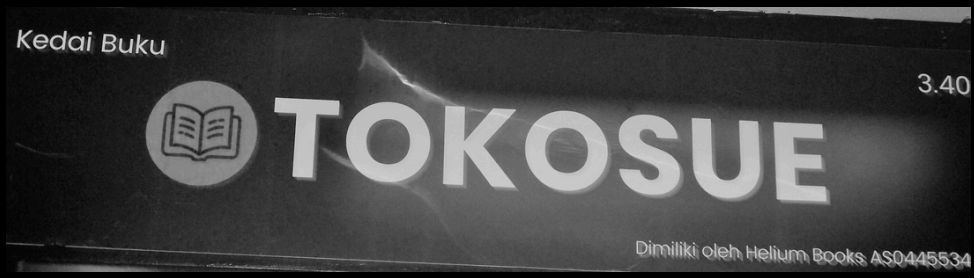
Now here's my overall feedback on the event I guess. To be quite frank I don't believe I have anything too negative to say, I'd argue the event went on quite smoothly. I will say though that due to the number of attendees, a lot of the activities going on like the talks and the workshops only had a small number of people participating. I feel like they could've garnered the attention of more people, had they advertised the event on a larger scale but then again the event itself is fairly small. This isn't to mention that zine related events in general might only attract a certain crowd of people. This doesn't mean people who are completely clueless on what zines are shouldn't attend though, I'd say it's encouraged actually but of course folks tend to lose interest on things they're not particularly familiar with so that could be a contributing factor.

The event did get on the news though so hopefully that sort of helped with spreading the word about the event a bit. Maybe upcoming zine fairs will have more people, who knows right?

I know I've probably said it a million times already but community events like this does mean a lot to me. I wouldn't say they're nonexistent today but you are seeing less and less of them at times so to do something like this which helps bring people together is really meaningful whether you realise or not.

I was a born a little too late to experience what any zine fairs were like back in the day but I'd imagine they probably had a better crowd of people then, a time when zines were way more popular and perhaps slightly more relevant than they are today. With that being said, I am seeing zines (mini zines especially) gaining attention again in art spaces and certain subcultures. I think we should keep the "zine scene" alive, even if it means only a small percentage of people actually care y'know...

IN LOVING MEMORY OF TOKOSUE



I don't think there'll ever be another bookstore like Tokosue and even if there was, it wouldn't be the same. It's funny to think that I might never have even started this zine if it wasn't for Tokosue and if it wasn't for this zine, I might've never met some of the friends I have today.

To those who are unfamiliar with Tokosue or didn't even know it existed prior to this article then I'll just have you know that it was way more than just some small indie bookstore located in Wisma Central. To me Tokosue was a place that evidently connected me to a lot of people. From writers to musicians to artists to photographers, the list goes on and on but the one thing we all shared in common was our love for this bookstore.

When the "Save A Bookstore" campaign was launched early on in 2025, I tried not to worry too much about it. Surely the bookstore could still stay afloat for a couple more years? But managing an indie bookstore isn't as easy as it sounds and in November of that same year, the bookstore finally closed down for good.

This part of my zine isn't really meant for me to dwell on something that is long gone but rather to commemorate what we once had and all the positives it brought us. Tokosue may be gone for good but that doesn't mean it'll be forgotten. It's sad to think things could've lasted a little longer, had more people discovered the place a lot earlier but there's so many "what ifs" out there and getting upset over it doesn't really help now does it?

I'm glad for Tokosue being my introduction to the local zine scene and I'm even more happy for the small little platform Tokosue has given me just by helping me sell my zine at their bookstore. I think it's safe to say that I'll cherish that for a very long time.

If you're someone out there who dreams of having an independent bookstore of their own, I just want to say to not let this part of my zine to discourage you but rather make it a motivation. Your dreams aren't entirely impossible if you're willing to put in the effort to achieve it (which is easier said than done) but with that you should also be prepared to face the struggles that come with it. Sometimes certain things might come to an end and that's okay.

Perhaps I'm going a little off track now but I just want you to know that if you ever decide to walk around Wisma Central on some random Saturday, among all the rundown and closed stores with dusty windows and glass displays, you might find one shop lot on the second floor with several stickers still stuck to the side of its pillar. That's where a small indie bookstore once inhabited its walls, with zines and books galore waiting inside for the right person to purchase...

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